

THE QUIVER

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"I might have known there was nothing good in it"—p. 403.

HIS BY RIGHT.

BY ALTON CLYDE, AUTHOR OF "UNDER FOOT," "JOHN HESKETH'S CHARGE," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER LXXVI.—"No Heir."

"KEEP him back—for mercy's sake keep him back!" And the young doctor pointed excitedly towards Sir Richard Chadburn, who was approaching the refreshment room; but not one in that horror-stricken crowd moved; they seemed rooted to the spot—paralysed by the sudden presence of death among them, and the awful cry of "Dead!" for Gerald had unconsciously uttered the

exclamation aloud, sending a chill to the hearts of all who heard him.

"For mercy's sake keep him back!" he repeated, seeing no one attempted to intercept the baronet. "It is his father, the shock may kill him—some of you keep him back."

This second appeal had the effect of rousing two gentlemen in the crowd to action. They met the baronet at the door, and prevented his entering; they were too late, however, to hinder him from seeing that something serious had happened, and it proved a difficult matter to keep him out of the room, it being necessary to use some force to get the old man away from that part of the station, a proceeding he energetically protested against.

"I tell you my son is there, waiting for me, and I insist on going in."

"Very sorry, but——"

The baronet angrily interrupted—"What is the meaning of this violence? If you do not desist I will enter an action against you for assault."

"I assure you, Sir Richard Chadburn," pleaded one of the gentlemen, who knew the baronet by sight, and had recognised him, "I assure you we are doing it for your own good: let me persuade you to wait a few moments——"

"Not a moment, sir—not a moment," interrupted Sir Richard, haughtily. "And I demand an explanation. Upon whose authority do you presume to control my movements? Release me, I tell you!"

"We dare not, Sir Richard."

"Dare not!" repeated the baronet, half in anger and half in surprise.

"No, we really dare not, unless you give your word not to enter the refreshment room."

"Why am I not permitted to go in; has anything happened? What is the matter, gentlemen?"

The expression of anger died out of the old man's face, for the thought flashed through his mind, that whatever had occurred during his absence, he had something to do with it, though in what way he could not imagine. He had noticed the circle of gentlemen gathered in one corner—noticed also that they had all suddenly turned and looked towards him just as he was about to enter the room. Now, he remembered it was the place where he had left his son and Gerald Darley. What did it all mean?

"Gentlemen, you have not answered my question. What has happened?"

He looked uneasily at the two men. They glanced at each other and remained silent. Sir Richard saw the interchange of looks, which were too expressive for him not to easily interpret; he knew as well as if they had spoken the words, that they had asked each other the question—"What are we to do?"

The baronet's voice faltered as he once more entreated them to relieve his anxiety.

"Pray be candid, gentlemen, and tell me what it is you are afraid of my seeing. Is anything the matter

with my—my son? For mercy's sake, gentlemen, say something!"

Before either of the men could answer, Gerald Darley joined them. Sir Richard looked anxiously into the young doctor's face, and read in it a confirmation of the vague fears that had forced their way into his mind. There was a sharp tone of agony in his voice as he said, "Where is Cyril, Mr. Darley? Is anything the matter with him?"

"I am sorry to say he has been taken suddenly ill, Sir Richard."

"Taken suddenly ill!" repeated the baronet; "then I must go to him at once."

The two gentlemen having released him when the young doctor had come up, he was moving away, but Gerald caught him by the arm, saying gravely, "Stay a moment, Sir Richard, I have something more to tell you."

"Tell it me afterwards, Mr. Darley, I could not listen now, I must see Cyril at once."

"Your presence there will do no good, Sir Richard."

Great drops of anguish stood out on the old man's face as he said, in a low agitated voice, "You are keeping something back, Mr. Darley—I can see it plainly—what, what? Have mercy on me, and tell me the truth!"

The crowd instinctively drew closer round them, and waited breathlessly for the doctor's answer—waited and watched for the result.

Gerald Darley looked anxiously into the baronet's face, and hesitated; he dreaded the effect of what he had to tell, and he was thinking how he could do it best.

"Surely you are not going to tell me that—that——"

Gerald finished the sentence in a voice almost as broken as Sir Richard's—"He is past all human skill!"

* * * * *

Cyril Chadburn had died from heart disease. The shock was a terrible one to Sir Richard and Lady Chadburn, coming as it did so unexpectedly, for there had been nothing to prepare them for it. Cyril's habitual reserve extended even to his intercourse with his mother. He had rarely talked about himself; and though he had jestingly alluded to a pain in his side, and to having become one of Gerald Darley's patients, they had not the slightest suspicion that there was any cause for uneasiness on the score of his health.

This second bereavement was a crushing blow to the Chadburn pride. It left the ancestral tree branchless and bare, and foreloomed the extinction of the proud old name, which had so long held its own in the country. Cyril's premature death had broken the long line of family descent, for at the baronet's death the estate would pass to a distant relative of Sir Richard's.

"No heir!" this was the lamentation that rose

from the house of mourning, over which it helped to cast a deeper shadow of desolation. This thought gave a keener sting to the grief of the baronet, and bowed still lower the haughty head of the heart-stricken mother, sitting by the solitary hearth, with set white face, and hands passively folded over her black dress, sorrowing, like Rachel for her children, "and would not be comforted, because they are not." Cyril gone—Cyril, her favourite, upon whose career she had built such proud hopes, and centred so many ambitious dreams! Bereft of both sons! was it retribution for the blind, exclusive love which had been so prodigal to the one, so niggard to the other?

It was at that sad time, while the preparations were going on for the stately funeral, that the mother recalled the fate of her younger son, and her heart cried out yearningly, "Oh! if I had Harold left—Harold, whom I neglected, and coldly turned from in his hour of need, when a loving word would have kept him at home, and helped to make him a good and dutiful son. I see now that I have been to blame, and deserve this punishment."

Pass under the chastening rod, proud heart; you need the discipline and the trial, before you will be meet for the merciful dispensation that has had care of one storm-beaten, disabled ship, the *Wild Wave*, from Auckland, which is bringing safely back a home-sick exile—the lost son, spared to be forgiven and blessed, and taken still nearer to the hearts of both parents. When the coffin of the deceased heir is resting among those of his ancestors, and the sculptor is cutting the name of Cyril in the recording marble, his brother will be far on his way home, happily ignorant of the sad event which has so materially changed his future.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

SEEKING AN EXPLANATION.

"WHATEVER is the matter, miss? you look as if you were going to faint."

There was genuine apprehension in Phoebe's look and tone as she asked her young mistress the question, at the same time extending one of her sturdy arms, ready to support her if it should be needed; and, judging from external signs, there was sufficient ground for alarm. She had been startled by the sudden whitening of Bessie's face, and the strange, bewildered expression in her eyes. Phoebe was getting excited. With her usual rapidity in drawing conclusions, she had at once fixed upon, as the cause of the mischief, the mysterious personage who had persuaded her to take the letter and give it to her mistress, with no small amount of blame to herself for consenting to be the bearer of a message from him.

"I might have known there was nothing good in it," she murmured to herself, as she knelt at her young lady's feet, and took one of the unresisting

hands, stroking it softly between her own red palms. Bessie, who was accustomed to Phoebe's demonstrative way of showing her affection, looked kindly at her.

"Oh, Miss Bessie, I wish I hadn't done it!" said Phoebe, suddenly, with a rueful expression that had something comic in it.

"What do you wish you had not done, Phoebe?"

"That I hadn't given you the letter, miss."

"Why?"

"Because it is making you ill. You are so white that it frightens me to look at you, and I know that letter's at the bottom of it all. Mother said I had no right to take it, and I wish I never had. No good ever comes of meddling with underhand things. I might have known that, miss; but if ever I catch that old man sneaking about here again, I'll——"

At this point Bessie managed to withdraw her hand from Phoebe's, and her voice checked the breathless torrent of words.

"Phoebe, you don't know what you are talking about."

"Perhaps not, miss; and if I've made any mistake, I'm sorry."

This was answered in a tone half reproachful and half dignified, and intended to mark a sense of injury on the part of Phoebe, who was sensitive where her mistress was concerned. There might have been something of severity in Bessie's tone, but she herself was not conscious of it. Her mind was just then too much troubled and preoccupied to have room for small matters, though it was anything but a small matter to poor Phoebe.

Bessie rose from her seat and put away her sketch-book and pencils, saying hurriedly, "Don't trouble about me, Phoebe; I am quite well."

"You don't look so, miss; and it's my fault. I had no business to bring you that letter."

"You did quite right, Phoebe. Don't let me hear you blame yourself again. Is your master up?"

"Yes, miss; he's in his study. Mother took his breakfast in there. She says he was up very early, and," added Phoebe, hesitatingly, "she's been making herself quite uneasy about him."

"Why?" interrogated Bessie, anxiously; "is he not well?"

Her fears were quickly roused. From the time that she first knew the old man to be ailing, a word was sufficient to excite her apprehension. Remark- ing that Phoebe still hesitated, she repeated her question, adding in a tone of evident distress, "Oh, Phoebe! if anything is the matter with him, it should not be kept from me."

"No, Miss Bessie; but I didn't mean to say that master was ill; it's only mother's fancy. She had to ask for some money this morning, and to give him some bills, which made it worse; but master was just as quiet as a lamb, and never grumbled a word, and gave her money to settle all the bills.

That's why she's so uneasy, for she says it's not natural."

This explanation somewhat relieved Bessie.

"I must go to him at once, Phœbe, and judge for myself whether there is any real cause for uneasiness."

"I don't think you need trouble yourself, miss; it is only my mother's fancy."

"I hope it may prove to be as you say; but I must see for myself."

"Well then, Miss Bessie, you let me do your hair first."

She was answered with a little nervous laugh.

"Not on any account, my good Phœbe; I should not have patience to sit under the operation."

She had the letter still in her hand, and was twisting it about while she talked. Phœbe watched the play of the restless fingers. There was still the glitter of excitement in the large eyes, but a bright spot of colour on each cheek had taken the place of the former paleness.

Phœbe went back to her household work that morning thoroughly mystified about Miss Bessie and the letter which had so strangely moved her, and she wondered what there was in it. Her perplexity was increased by her mother's way of receiving her report about Bessie. The old housekeeper became excited as she listened to her daughter.

"Whatever will master say when he hears of it, Phœbe? There's no knowing what mischief you may have helped to bring about. I gave you my advice, and spoke out as plain as I could, but it was all no use. You had always a stupid will of your own, Phœbe."

These remarks made Phœbe very uncomfortable, at the same time confirming her latent suspicion that there was a secret somewhere, and her mother knew more than she would tell.

Bernard Ayrton's letter was so mysteriously worded as to be inexplicable to Bessie. It went back to her babyhood, with covert hints and strange allusions to persons and circumstances of which she knew nothing. To this was added some vague sentimentalising, intended to enlist her sympathies and revive certain remembrances presumed to be lying dormant in her mind, but utterly failing in their object, for it presented only a picture from the fragments of a broken mirror.

Bessie folded the letter with no very clear idea of the writer's meaning. She only understood one thing in connection with the ambiguous epistle, and it made her hot and angry—its tone was against Lewis

Darley, of whom it spoke in terms that seemed to take the form of accusation, and ended with a haughty reference to him that sent the indignant blood tingling to her finger-tips. It was then that she decided to take the letter to her benefactor. It was the old childish habit, a trustfulness which in early days had referred all her troubles and perplexities to him, and the faith which relied upon his wisdom for the smoothing of all difficulties. She found him sitting listlessly in his easy chair, with an untasted cup of tea beside him, his desk open as usual, with paper and pens, and books of reference ranged in order, only the hand of the worker was idle. It was not until she stood before him that Bessie recalled the last interview and what had taken place in it. For the first time in her remembrance a shadow seemed to have crept between them, a sort of reserve that sent an indefinable chill to the heart of the young girl, though it was not enough to be visible to a third person. Bessie missed the old fondness from his look and tone, and it made her heart ache. Without waiting for him to speak, she put the letter before him, saying simply, "I came to show you this, uncle."

"Why, is there anything particular in it?"

"I don't know, uncle, but it is full of things I don't understand, and the writer refers me to you."

"Refers you to me!" and Lewis Darley extended his hand for the letter. As soon as he glanced at it, he asked abruptly, "Where did you get this, Bessie?"

"Phœbe gave it me this morning."

"Did she tell you who gave it to her?"

"Yes, an elderly gentleman stopped her last night, and wanted her to ask me to come to the gate, as he had something important to communicate."

"Did you go?"

"No, Phœbe refused to take the message; then he gave her that letter: can you tell me what he means, uncle?"

"I can and will, Bessie, though I had intended to keep silent until your twenty-first birthday; this has precipitated the explanation; and again, your refusal of my nephew having upset all my cherished plans for your happiness, which was one of the chief reasons for my keeping silent, for my life was wrapt up in you, and I could not bear the thought of losing you—"

"Losing me, uncle?"

"Yes, that is what I said. But sit down, child, and I will tell you everything."

(To be continued.)

ILLUSTRATIONS OF FAITH.

BY THE REV. ROBERT MAGUIRE, M.A., VICAR OF CLERKENWELL.

"Meantime my God is silent long,
Until the glorious issue
Shows that no thread was woven wrong
In all that wondrous tissue."

THE eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews is itself the great inspired treatise on this topic, containing as it does a whole series of "Illustrations of Faith," gathered from the lives and labours and faithful testimonies of "the elders"—the grand old patriarchs of the world's earlier history, who by their energetic faith "obtained a good report," and of whom it is further testified "the world was not worthy." Here we are enabled to read, not only what faith is, nor even what it is *like*, but also what faith practically *does*, or enables its possessor to accomplish. First is the definition, and then are the examples given. Thus, if we are asked to say what faith "is like," we would answer, It is like Abel's goodly motive of his "more excellent sacrifice;" like Enoch's consistent trust in God; like Noah's patience and obedience; like Abraham's unquestioning confidence in God; like Isaac's far-seeing wisdom, when he blessed both his sons; like Jacob's telescopic view, when, though his eyes were dim, he so wittingly blessed each of the sons of Joseph; like Joseph's implicit belief in God's promise, commanding that his bones should be kept in Egypt as the pledge of his people's inheritance of the Land of Promise; like Moses's choice for God, casting in his lot with his people; and, indeed, "time would fail" us, as it failed the apostle, to tell out all that faith is like. It is the motive of every good man; it is the principle that actuates every God-fearing man; it is that power which trusts, believes, confides, and, in spite of the present, already lives in the future.

Here is a goodly and significant "Illustration of Faith:"—"Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Hab. iii. 17, 18).

Faith is the first beginning of the spiritual life. It is not one of those more advanced accomplishments of the child of God—except in its higher and more spiritual development—but it is the very beginning of all. Faith is not the very last round of the ladder, with just one step more to heaven; it is rather the very first round of the ladder, without which we cannot begin to climb at all: "Without faith it is impossible to please God"

(Heb. xi. 6);—impossible to please God, and therefore impossible to serve him acceptably. Thus faith is the first grasp we have of God, bringing with it the first recognition we receive from him.

The familiar and expressive definition of faith given by the apostle is, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. xi. 1). To speak after modern "illustration," faith is "*like*" a bank-note issued for currency, and circulating in the market. The bank-note circulates *as money*, and yet it is not money; it is only a piece of tissue-paper. It is a promissory note—a promise; and it is received on the faith that is reposed in the name of the promiser. The consequence is, that with it people buy and sell; it passes from hand to hand—that is, it is actually "*the substance*" of that which it promised, and counts for such in all the market transactions in which it is used. This great power is illustrated by the examples of those that trusted in *God's* promises; such as Moses, who preferred to commit himself to the fortune—then a darkening one—of God's people, though in a strange land, than to count the court of Egypt as his home. Thus he walked "*by faith*" of the future, and not "*by sight*" of the present. And this was his motive—"He had respect unto the recompense of the reward;" and, with a present and earthly and visible king to honour and obey, he preferred to live "*as seeing him who is invisible*" (Heb. xi. 26, 27).

The source and origin of faith is of God—it is the gift of God. Its place is in the heart—

"The heart,

And not the head, is fountain of this art."

It is the Divine seed planted in the soil of the human heart. It is *as a plant*, to be rooted and grounded; it is *as a root*, inwardly planted, outwardly fruitful. Thus faith and works are as inseparably associated together as the root of the tree and the fruit thereof; as the body, and the spirit that gives it life. And for this reason works are not meritorious, inasmuch as they are the result, and not the cause, of faith; and where true faith is, there *must be* works of righteousness: "insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by the fruit."

But we must carefully distinguish. There is true faith and false faith; the genuine and the counterfeit; dead and living faith; faith in profession, and faith in possession. And these are to be distinguished, as in all other contexts of experience, by trial and test. Suppose I bring you the tidings that all your furniture is rotten, your bank bank-

rapt, your money counterfeit, your deeds and leases worthless, it would be a sad affliction to you, and you would not rest until you had personally seen to all these things, and had tested them, and tried and proved their real value and worth. Then, if they abide the test, they are all the stronger, and better appreciated. And even so is it with our faith: if questioned or doubted, it will stand test, and come out "proof," because proved. The more it is proved, the more it is worth—"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter i. 7).

Hence great stress must be laid on the discipline of faith. It must be subjected to continual trial, if only to see whether it is weary and faint; and this discipline, while it suspiciously tests, is at the same time inuring its possessor to such hardness as will make him become more and yet more strong. See the discipline of an army—what obedience, what endurance, what watchfulness, what suffering; and this through various motives—the motive of necessity, or of duty, or of honour, or of valour, or of loyalty. And has the Christian warrior no strong motive for his faith, to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ?" And as this faith is tried and disciplined, so will be the measure of its growth and strength. An active, militant faith is stronger than sedentary faith; faith in motion is stronger than faith at rest; wrestling faith is stronger than passive faith. To live and be fruitful, to be healthy and strong, it must be an exercised faith—"faith that *worketh* by love."

There are some of God's children who are of "great faith," and some who are of "little faith." Weak faith is not despised of God; it is cherished by him, just as a nursing mother cherisheth her weak and sickly child. It is to weak faith the promise is given—"He carries the lambs in his arms;" and again, "A bruised reed shall he not break," &c. But this promise is not intended to be true all through the Christian life, at every period and at every stage. Faith, if weak to-day, must not be *always* weak; it must grow, and become more strong. Lambs are not always lambs; they grow to full size, and then they must not expect to be carried in the shepherd's arms. The bruised reed is not always to remain so; if bruised or bent, it is, by tender care bestowed, to knit together again, and grow strong once more. The smoking flax is not always to be a mere smouldering mass, but, breathed upon and fanned by the Spirit of God, it must kindle once more into a flame, and burn brightly again. We must not be always satisfied with "the day of small things." And thus weak faith must grow into faith that is strong. In the healthy body, every power and principle and

faculty and talent must "grow with its growth, and strengthen with its strength;" and so our faith must not lag behind, or be stunted; it must rather advance and grow.

And as there are gradations (*gradus*, "a step") of faith, so are there fluctuations (*fluctus*, "a wave") of faith also. Faith has its waverings, its uncertainties, its doubts, its difficulties. There are circumstances which are to faith what the waves of the sea are to a ship, tossing and troubling the soul, and sometimes bringing it in peril, and involving it in loss. It is a great pity that such fluctuations should affect our faith, but it is a matter of our painful experience that they do so affect it. The proper advice under such circumstances would be that given to a young midshipman by the captain of his ship—"Look up!"—that is, when up in the rigging for duty, and winds and waves roaring, look not down upon the moving ship and rolling waves, but *look up* to the fixed and immovable firmament and sky. There is a great spiritual meaning in this. The soul must keep its eye fixed, not on changeable frames and feelings, but on the unchangeable promises of God—on things above, not on things beneath.

Nevertheless, while these fluctuations last, there is much disquietude to the soul. There is, indeed, no promise that we shall be altogether saved from this. The promise is—"According to your faith be it unto you" (Matt. ix. 29). The ship that is launched upon the waters must be prepared to expect all kinds of weather—storm or calm, rough or smooth. The promise given to faith is, not that it shall be preserved from storms, but that it shall be preserved from shipwreck. And hence another "Illustration of Faith"—the *anchor*. The anchor passes *through the waters*—the stormy and troubled waters—and lays hold *upon the rock*. The stormy waters will, no doubt, toss and disturb the soul; but the anchor of faith breaks through all these, and never rests until it comes at the rock; and there, in the lowest depths, hidden and secure, it holds the soul at peace from the stormy wind and tempest.

Another "illustration" is found in the use of the *telescope*. The telescope is an instrument of observation that enables us to see further than the naked eye, and puts us in view of objects that others as yet cannot see. So is faith the powerful object-glass of the soul, placing us in communion with the things that are afar off. But then, here again is the possible drawback of circumstances and feelings. Whatever may be the power of the telescope, that power may be neutralised by circumstances: the hands that hold the telescope may tremble; the lens may be dull; the instrument not properly pointed; the focus not properly adjusted; possibly the telescope may be held to the *blind eye*, or some intervening object may

stand in the way—any or all of these contingencies may happen to the telescope of faith; or, perhaps, the cap of unbelief or sin may still remain upon the glass; and you might as well expect to see through it as to light a candle with the extinguisher upon it.

This phase of faith has received its own "illustration" (our illustration itself illustrated) in that portion of the "Pilgrim's Progress" where the pilgrims have arrived at the Delectable Mountains. Now, from the Palace Beautiful, this advanced stage of the pilgrimage had been pointed out to *Christian* by the virgins of the palace, who informed him—"When thou comest there, from thence thou mayest [not *shalt*, but *mayest*] see the gate of the Celestial City." So here, at the Delectable Mountains, is the place of furthest vision; and, accordingly, here is the place for the telescope. But the pilgrims had first been taken by the shepherds on a round of observation of other scenes, some of them very terrible and alarming, so that when they placed the telescope to the eye their hands trembled so that "they could not look steadily through the glass." The consequence was that the view was uncertain and confused, and they saw not, but "*thought they saw*;" and not the gate itself, but "something *like the gate*, and also *some of the glory of the place*." Ah, thus is it oftentimes with our faith—"nor clear, nor dark." Mists and vapours of doubt and fear sadly obscure the view. The strength of faith greatly helps the clearness of faith—"According to thy faith." And so was it afterwards, at the fords of the river: those waters are not all of the same depth, nor the same for all pilgrims. The soundings answer to the plummet of faith—"Deeper or shallower, as you *believe in the King of the place*." Thus is it that circumstances and frames and feelings prove unfriendly to faith, intercepting the thoroughfare of vision, and making the prospect dim and uncertain. How true are those familiar words of Watts's hymn—

"O could we make these doubts remove,
These gloomy thoughts that rise,
And see the Canaan that we love
With unobscured eyes!"

Faith is as *the eye*—the quick, far-seeing eye; and, as such, its business is to *look*—to look outward, and away from itself. It has been well said that "faith is the outward and not the inward look of the soul." Thus the brazen serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, to be looked at, and to draw all eyes toward it from all quarters of the camp of Israel. Hence the exhortation to our faith, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth" (Isa. xlv. 22).

Faith is as *the hand*—at first the hand of the needy, the empty hand. This hand is, at the Saviour's invitation, to be stretched forth and to be filled. The hand of faith is the apprehending

and appropriating power of the soul; it is to hold and to lay hold, and to grasp, and to keep. As the hand of Israel laid hold of the angel and wrestled with him all night, so is the hand of faith to lay hold on God. This hand of faith makes everything one's own—each of Gideon's men with *his own torch and his own pitcher*; each soldier with *his own sword*; each virgin with *her own lamp and oil*, wielded and borne in the hand of the owner.

Faith is as a *shield*—"the shield of faith" (Eph. vi. 16). The sword is wielded in the right hand, the offensive weapon; the shield is borne on the left arm, and, as the defensive armour of the soldier, it wards off the darts of the enemy—"the fiery darts of the wicked one."

Faith is also as a *breastplate*—"Putting on the breastplate of faith and love" (1 Thess. v. 8). This serves as a further protection to the spiritual life, against the assault of the spiritual foe.

Thus faith may be illustrated under manifold similitudes. It is called the *eye* of faith, because it sees Christ; the *ear* of faith, because it hears the voice of Jesus; the *hand* of faith, because it lays hold on Christ; the *heart* of faith, because through it man believeth unto righteousness.

And this faith justifies—not as the effectual cause of justification, but as the effectual means: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). The justifying effect of faith is that we thus are enabled to believe in God—to believe in his word and his promises; and to act on that belief, trustfully and confidently. Thus faith is the simple casting of ourselves on God; that is to say, Jesus having died for sin, his blood cleanses from sin, and we are accepted of God for his sake. Faith believes this, and accordingly throws itself into the Saviour's loving arms in the full and entire confidence of a loving child. The little child's definition of faith is worthy of note—"Faith is taking God at his word, and asking no questions." Hence, also, Luther's words—"Faith is a certain dark confidence." I suppose his meaning was, trusting God in the dark. It reminds me also of those two intensely expressive lines of Quarles—

"My logic is the faculty of Faith,
Where all things are resolved into *HE SAITH*."

I am writing this paper amid the festivities of Christmas-time (although we shall be approaching spring-time before it appears in *THE QUIVER*; but we must take time by the forelock). Among the many little pastimes of the season is a game called "Playing at Confidence." My little boy challenged me one of these mornings to play it with him; and so I did. It was after this fashion: the child, standing apart from me a distance of nearly his whole height, turned his back to me, and said,

"I am going to fall back into your arms, and mind you catch me!" And accordingly, without seeing me, but knowing I was there, and that my arm was strong, and that I was his father, he fell backwards, and I caught him up. This was the child's faith and confidence; he believed in me, and in my power and will to hold him safe. And is not God the Father of us all? and are not we his children? Can we trust him, confide in him, cast ourselves upon him, and know that all is well?

"HE SAITH," and therefore I believe. This, indeed, is the simple and unaffected logic of faith. It is that full dependence upon God, which only they that truly believe can truly feel. "Be it unto me according to thy word." This is the burden of one of Spitta's beautiful German hymns—

"God hath said it, God hath said it,
God hath said, and I obey;
God hath said it, God hath said it,
And with joy I go my way."*

We are poor; he is rich, and he makes us rich.
We are weak; he is strong, and he makes us

strong. We are in debt: he pays the debt, and we are free. We are hungry; he has the supply of food, and we are fed. Faith regards God as a friend—a true and trusty friend, a genuine and never-failing friend, a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. All our want is filled in him; all our necessity is supplied by him. He saith—"I have paid thy debt;" and Faith replies, "My debt is paid, then am I free!" What more simple than this? what further discharge can be required? Both parties are agreed that the debt is paid; and even such is the power and effect of faith. This is well expressed by George Herbert in his Ode on "Faith"—

"I owed him thousands, and much more;
I did believe that I did nothing owe,
And lived accordingly; my creditor
Believes so too, and lets me go.

"Faith makes me anything, or all
That I believe is in the sacred story;
And when sin placeth me in Adam's fall,
Faith sets me higher in his glory."

THE SHIPS BEYOND THE MIST.

TWAS summer, but across the sky
The clouds hung like some heavy pall;
And o'er the sea, all dark and high,
The mist had raised a gloomy wall.

When suddenly before my gaze
The sun in noonday splendour shone,
And swiftly, through the golden haze,
Two stately ships went sailing on.

With dazzling rays of glory bright
The sunbeams wrapt each snowy sail;
Like joyous creatures, winged with light,
They moved above the misty veil.

Along the skies they seemed to float,
And as I watched the sight so fair,
My thoughts, to pleasant fancies wrought,
Turned softly into words of prayer.

I said, "My Father God, do Thou
To me in heavenly light draw near,
For sorrow's clouds have gathered now
O'er my life's path all dark and drear.

"Hide Thou my life with Christ in Thee,
And then in holiest sunshine blest,
My onward course may radiant be,
As those bright ships beyond the mist."

C. P. C.

WORK UNDERGROUND.

IF the question, "What is a mine?" were put to some, the answer would, sometimes at least, amount to little more than the words, "A deep hole, from which minerals are obtained." This may seem a daring assertion in an age when everybody is supposed to know everything. But we still hold, like obstinate people, to our opinion. Observe, discerning reader, that at present we blame no one for being unacquainted with "life underground." Our friend, Mr. Bitterley, the hop merchant, sagely remarked, "I've enough work above ground to worry me, without peering into

the stomach of a mine." Very good, Mr. Bitterley, we will therefore draw up for your use this paper, and if you "won't read it," why, then we shall have our own opinion of you, that's all.

Before, however, we can describe the subterranean works, on which the prosperity of England so largely depends, we must say a word about the "tide," down which the busy workers daily plunge to their toils. Perhaps a gentleman has been informed by a geologist that a wild part of his estate is "kindly," or, in other words, has a bed of coal underneath. Visions of untold wealth rise before the delighted owner; but he is soon sobered by calculations of the possible cost of driving a "shaft" down to the coal. Perhaps a company is

* "Lyra Domestica," p. 65.



(Drawn by M. E. EDWARDS.)

"Came she to a pleasant land,
As the year let in the swallow."—p. 412.

formed to undertake the risk of sinking a passage down to the deeply-hidden treasure. A weary and a worrying work does this shaft-sinking sometimes prove. A fortune may be exhausted in digging for a fortune. The work is sometimes provokingly slow; a whole week has been occupied in sinking the shaft two yards only. Far beneath lies untold wealth, and the nervous owner can only approach it at the rate of a foot a day. It is a provoking trial of patience, perseverance, and purse. In one Cornish mine the excavators were able to penetrate no more than 120 feet in six years; less than *one inch* a day!

Not only does the hard rock spitefully bar the approach to the treasure, but the great depths at which the "black diamonds" are often placed present additional obstacles in the miner's path. The Monkwearmouth coal-mine, in Durham, has a perpendicular descent of 1,590 feet; and the now deserted mine of Eselschacht, in Bohemia, was 3,778 feet below the surface. The shafts are "tubbed," to keep them from falling in, by a vast system of timber or even of iron supports. The strength of this *tubbing* may be estimated from the fact, that some shafts thus secured will resist a pressure on their sides equal to 100 pounds on every inch. Few steam-engine boilers are capable of withstanding such a force. The reader will not think these precautions excessive, when he bears in mind that the falling in of a shaft may cause the death of every man in the works, to say nothing of the total ruin of the mine.

Let us suppose the mineral treasure to be reached; is there any further difficulty? Water often pours in from every side, as if some angry spirit of the mine were determined to protect his subterranean goods from human touch. Steam-engines of enormous power are required to eject the foe. Some readers will doubtless remember that the skill and genius of James Watt were first called out by the construction of engines for pumping the water from mines. Here is another formidable item of cost for the mine-owner, many of these powerful pumping-machines costing £8,000 each. We will now suppose the shaft to be in good order, and a 1,300 horse-power engine busily at work keeping the water in subjection. Of course the remunerative mineral is now quickly raised, and the owner sees at last his exhausted bank account undergoing a most pleasant and healthy revival. Not so fast, reader, does "underground work" proceed. The proprietor's hopes are beginning to brighten, he has really reached precious masses, and has carried up lumps in his pocket as trophies of the fight. One bit of bright, seamy coal has even been placed in the hall of his mansion, as an earnest of approaching fortune. The children gaze with superstitious wonder on "the lump," though saucy little Minnie calls it

ugly, and has often asked "why papa looks so very serious at it?"

However, a host of men now set to work; superintendents, captains, viewers, "tutmen" (excavators), "tributers" (excavators of ore), put in co-operation the power of picks, wedges, shovels, sledges, borers, mallets, "tamping-irons," and even gunpowder, to subdue the obstinate rock. The long alleys, called "levels," are now cut into the heart of the earth, and the "beds" being rich in ore, plenty of coal will soon be sent up "to grass." So largely is "blasting" employed in some mines that the cost of the gunpowder for one year, in one set of works, amounted to £13,200. The miners are charged for the powder and candles used; and, strange as it may seem, often pay a much higher price than that at which the goods are purchased by the mine-owners. Thus, a man will be charged eightpence, or even tenpence a pound for candles which cost his employers but sixpence; and a like excessive price is sometimes put on the powder. What is the object of this? "To give the masters an additional means of screwing more profit out of the men," says one sharp critic. "Quite wrong, sir, I assure you," is the reply of the managers. The reason given by these gentlemen is, that if the candles and powder were sold at a low rate to the workers, they would take large quantities away, and sell for ready money to the chandlers' shops. Even the high price does not altogether prevent this, as thousands of pounds weight are taken to the village shops and sold at one-half the price the improvident miners pay for them. A miner's wife will give a penny candle for a farthing's worth of sewing-thread. Two pounds of candles are usually allowed to each miner for one week's consumption; and when two men work together, one light only is often used, and the candles thus saved are bartered at the chandler's or the ale-house for money or beer. These facts seem to indicate something wrong in the mode of paying the men at too long intervals, and thus driving them too close for a little ready money.

As the "levels" are driven farther into the rock, tramways are laid down, and horses employed to drag the heavily-laden trucks along the gloomy avenues to the shaft. Poor horses! some readers may exclaim. Their lot is far worse than that of the pitmen, who can return "to bank" after the eight hours' spell of work is over. The horses do not need much pity; they are really well cared for and rather petted by the men. The chief penalty of their subterranean life is the tendency to become blind for some days when brought up to the light.

In time the mine workings are driven so far into the earth as to present a most complex system of roads, streets, alleys, and courts, forming a sin-

gular underground town. There is, however, this peculiarity in the mine-town—that the streets run *one under the other*, being connected by perpendicular, well-like openings, called “winzes.” In fact, the levels often run one under another much as the sewers in a great city underlie the streets. The grated sewer openings will in this case represent the winzes, though on a small scale. The reader will thus see that the whole of the workings will be gradually subdivided into cubical masses, bounded above and below by the levels, and at each end by the winzes. These are usually sunk at the distance of every fifty yards, and connect the upper with the lower passages. The spaces thus bounded by levels and winzes are called “pitches,” each of which being in time excavated, the whole underground mass becomes completely honey-combed.

If the rock be honey-combed by incessant excavations of the “pitches,” what prevents the whole mine from falling in with a fatal crash upon the workers? To secure against this, large masses of the mineral, and even of valuable coal, are often left standing as columns of support to the roof and sides of the various levels. If the ore or coal be too precious to be thus sacrificed, then strong timbers or stone archings are employed to secure the mine from being crushed in. Sometimes the superincumbent mass is left without sufficient support, the surface then often cracks, yawns, and even sinks into the excavated hollows below. In a wild and unfrequented district, this may be of little consequence, but woe to the careless proprietor of the worked-out mine, if buildings have been erected on the land. The owners bring their numerous actions for damages arising from cracked walls, twisted roofs, and dislocated foundations. In vain the mine-workers urge their right to extract all the minerals beneath; the indignant house-owners and exasperated tenants successfully implore both judge and jury to look at their dilapidated property and award heavy damages.

The “pick,” borer, and gunpowder, are the three chief mechanical powers employed to loosen the mineral masses from the rock. These operations are attended with little inconvenience when carried on in the open air, but the miner works in a close and narrow passage, where the fine dust caused by the blows of the pick, and the smoke of the exploded powder, load the heated air with millions of soot-like particles. We may describe hereafter the singular effect of this dust on the workman's lungs, but for the present we only ask the reader to imagine himself present at “a blasting.” A hole has been bored in the rock, the powder has been rammed in with the “tamping-iron,” and the fusee is fixed. We may suppose all this has been done in a proper and workman-like manner, so that no accident has frightened

our imaginary amateur miner. It is not unlikely, however, that matters go wrong; perhaps the miner is careless or stupid, and has rammed in some rough stones upon the powder to keep it firm, instead of using fine sand or clay. What is the result? perhaps the “tamping-iron”—the tool for ramming the powder down—strikes a spark from a stone, when a premature explosion drives out, as if from a cannon, a shower of shot-like stones. It may be asked how any one can be so foolhardy as to use an iron rammer in such a case. Many managers of mines have put the same question, and some have induced the men to use driving tools of wood; but in general the miners are no more afraid of a metal tamping instrument, than a soldier of an iron ramrod. Indeed, the men have in some cases actually “struck,” because the use of a safer apparatus was enforced. Many superintendents keep to the iron tools on the simple ground of cheapness. The cost of an iron tamping rammer is fourpence, while that of a copper instrument is three shillings and sixpence. On this principle, a miner's life seems to be worth something *under* three shillings and twopence. Some tamping-irons made of copper and lead may be bought for a shilling, so that in this case a man's life is risked for *eightpence*.

Let us suppose, however, that all does go well when the reader is a spectator. The fusee is lighted, the men retire to a safe distance, and in a short time the explosion reverberates through the long galleries, and a very avalanche of mineral crashes down upon the floor. The men rush to inspect the result, and are delighted at so successful a “blast.” But what is the matter with our visitor? He feels most uncomfortably, to say the least; something is wrong with his breathing; he has also an odd and not at all nice taste in his mouth, and the blinding smoke persists in working its way into eyes and nostrils. Thus the reader will see that a “blast” in a close mine, and on the surface, are two very different matters.

The work going on day and night in our 3,000 British coal-mines is difficult to realise. We hear not the sound of the 10,000 picks, borers, and sledges; we see not the subterranean towns where the grimy pitmen are manufacturing wealth and power for the British Empire. But we may note some of the results directly following from the labours of these coal-black workers. The myriad spindles of our cotton-factories, the blazing furnaces of the iron districts, the ceaseless work of steam-engines in towns, villages, and homesteads, and the fleets of steam-ships crowding the ocean highways, are all dependent on the mines, from which are drawn, day and night, the elements of an empire's strength. Such considerations may tend to quicken our sympathies for every class of these underground workers.

W. D.

A SUMMER BLOSSOM.

FRUIT was forming on the pea;
 Marsh-flowers burned beside the sedges;
 And the soft anemone
 Trembled on the brooklet's edges.
 Grew the white rose by the door,
 Grew the foxglove in the meadow,
 Virgin pinks were dappled o'er
 By the drooping fuchsia's shadow.
 Round the laden apple-tree,
 Round the juicy, crimson berry,
 Cooling winds made minstrelsy,
 To the plump and dimpled cherry.
 Moving golden fields of wheat,
 Swinging harebells 'mong the heather,
 Blowing health and fragrance sweet
 Through the mellow Autumn weather.
 Came she to a pleasant land,
 As the year let in the swallow;
 When the Spring with dainty hand
 Oped the primrose in the hollow.
 Lily cheek and lily brow,
 Yearning for the gracious Summer,
 Questioned daily, bud and bough,
 For the loved, but tardy comer.

May put blossoms on the thorn,
 Stirred the rosebuds on the bushes,
 And upon a dewy morn
 June awoke their sweetest blushes.
 July grew 'mid sunny calm,
 True to golden rule of duty,
 Soothed the sense with rarest balm,
 Filled the eye with softest beauty.
 And across the lovely face,
 Moving tenderly and stilly,
 Summer passed, but none could trace
 Other blossom than the lily.
 When she said, "Thou knowest best,"
 When then passed a term of weeping,
 Weary Hope lay down to rest
 Where the angel Faith was sleeping.
 Send her to the cooling grass,
 Through the balmly garden reaches,
 Rest a while, and let her pass
 Round the wall of mellow peaches,
 Now the winds are growing celd,
 Long the crimson sun reposes;
 Stir the brown and kindly mould,
 Lay the lily with the roses.

H. JOHNSTON.

NELLIE.

NELLIE was a pale, sickly-looking little girl, very thin and wan, and dressed in wretched ragged clothes. I think you would have been sorry for her, if you had seen her, particularly if you had known that she had not always been in this miserable state, for she was once clean and neatly though always poorly dressed, and had been very happy with a good, kind mother, who loved her better than anything in the world. But one sad day this dear mother was taken from her, and poor little Nellie was left alone in the world, with no one but strangers to look after her. For a time, a poor woman who lodged in the same house with them took care of her—indeed Nellie's mother had left her all the money she had to do so; but I'm afraid this woman was not a very good or honest person, for she took but little care of the child, and at last gave her up altogether to some low, wicked people called "tramps," who took Nellie off, and made her travel about with them from place to place, and with whom she was very unhappy and frightened, for they were a fierce bad set, and said wicked words and fought, and did many odd things that Nellie could not make out, but that all the same made her feel un-

comfortable, she scarcely knew why. She sometimes wondered why they kept her at all, for they never made any use of her, or taught her anything, except to take things out of the pocket of a big doll, with a bell round its neck, which bell, for some reason or other, was never to ring, for if it did poor Nellie was to get no dinner. This was all she knew about it, for she did not understand, poor little thing, that they were trying to make her a pickpocket, and had got hold of her, just because she was so small and neat of hand that they thought she would do their business better than others. But Nellie, as I said, knew nothing of this, if she had, she would have been more unhappy still, because her mother had always taught her to be true and honest, and never to touch what did not belong to her, and she had made her say every day the text, "Thou shalt not steal," and this one Nellie still remembered, though most of the other texts she had forgotten, and she said it each morning to herself, and when she said it, felt that in some way she was nearer her dear mother, whose face she remembered so well, always sad and pale, but always full of love for her, and always with a smile ready for her little Nellie, till the day she was taken from her, when Nellie

called and called, and there was no answer, no smile to meet her, no kiss ready for her, and she was told her mother was dead. The poor child remembered all this very well, but she liked best to think of her mother smiling at her, and speaking to her, and she tried to say the only text she had not forgotten, very gravely and reverently every day, just as if she was saying it to her mother still, and she had a kind of thought in her mind, if she said it often, and tried to do what that text said, that she was pleasing her, and would meet her again some day. She knew very little, poor child, but what she *did* know she tried, as you will see, to practise.

She had been with these tramps some months, and had wandered about a great deal through the country, in the summer-time, in a curious sort of house on wheels, but as yet they had not made any use of her—I suppose they thought she did not know enough yet. But now it was winter, and they left the house on wheels and came into a town, where they settled themselves in a wretched dark back street, in a miserable tumbledown house, which quite frightened Nellie to look at; and, if she had only known all the trouble she would suffer there, she would have been more frightened still.

It was a cold, snowy day, not long after they came there, that she was called by one of the women, and told she was to go out into the town, and try and take what she could get out of people's pockets. Nellie looked up quite puzzled into the woman's face, and at first did not say anything, but when the woman spoke again, quite angrily this time, and asked her what she was staring at her like a fool for, she answered quietly, "But, ma'am, that is stealing."

"And who said it wasn't?" asked the woman, sharply.

"But I mustn't do that," said Nellie, simply.

"Why not?" said the woman, giving her a shake.

"Because," answered Nellie, reverently, though her voice shook rather, "God said, 'Thou shalt not steal.'"

"We'll soon see all about that," replied the woman with a loud, hoarse laugh, and with that she went to the door and called one of the men, a fierce, wicked fellow, who went by the name of "Bill," and when he heard what she had to say, he came quickly into the room, looking terribly angry, and seizing Nellie by the arm, asked what she meant by such nonsense.

She was so terrified, poor child, she could not say a word, but only hung down her head and shook all over, so that she could scarcely stand. This only made him repeat his question more angrily than before, and squeeze her arm so tightly that she nearly cried out with pain. "Oh, sir," she said faintly, "I—I'll tell you—but you hurt me so."

"I'll hurt you more before I've done with you, if I hear any of your nonsense," he said, grinding his teeth.

Nellie tried to speak, but the words died away upon her lips, from the dreadful fright she was in.

"Well, can't you speak?" said he, not the least softened by her misery.

"Don't ask me to do it," she whispered.

"Don't ask you to do *what*?" he screamed out, catching her again by the arm; "what else do you think we've kept you for, all this time; is it to look at you, and admire you, and feed you for nothing? If you thought so, you're richly mistaken; we took you to make use of you—and make money by you—and now that we turn and ask you to do something for us, in return for the food and shelter we've given you, you stand there like a fool, doing nothing but sneaking about religion, and pretending you couldn't do such a thing as take a few shillings from rich people, who don't want them a bit, and give them to us, who've done so much for you. But we won't stand it, I can tell you. Will you do as you're desired, or will you not? If you don't, I can only promise you, you'll be very sorry for it."

Nellie did not speak for a moment, I think she was trying to ask God to help her, then she said, in a very low voice, so low that the man had to put down his head to hear it, "Sir, I cannot steal."

"You can't—can't you!" he said, and he seized a stick off the table and lifted it in the air.

"Oh, sir!" said she, falling on her knees, "don't beat me—please don't!" and she looked up at him, with her little sad, white face, enough to melt a heart of stone.

"Well, will you do as you're told?" he said, holding his stick still in the air.

For an instant she thought she must do it, the sight of that stick and that fierce man was so dreadful; but just then she fancied she heard her mother say in her ear, "Thou shalt not steal," and she felt she could not grieve her and God, whom she had often been told would be sorry if she did what was wrong, so she said, this time quite out loud, "No, I cannot."

The next moment a blow had come down on her that knocked her to the ground, and then another, but after that she did not remember anything more, for her senses went quite away from her, and when she came to herself again, she was lying in a dark shed, all by herself, cold and wet and miserable, for the wind was roaring outside, and the snow falling in through the chinks of the door. Poor little Nellie felt very miserable when she awoke, and all the dreadful things that had happened came back to her. She was weak and faint with hunger, for she had lain there many hours, and all her limbs were aching with pain; she was numb with cold too, and very, very unhappy—so unhappy that she buried her face in her hands and cried most bitterly. But the tears seemed to do her good, for when the first dreadful burst was over, she thought to herself, "What's the use of my crying

like this? it won't help me—oh, what *will* help me? Mother, mother, if I only had you again!" and then the sobs were beginning, but she stopped them with the thought, "Mother said God would help me, if I could *only* ask him! I must try," and she knelt down, though every movement gave her pain, and clasping her little hands, said, "O God, help me!" nothing more, she did not know any more to say, but that, as you know, was quite enough, for God does not want us to say many words, only just to tell him simply what we want.

She sat down on the ground after that, and wondered how God would help her. As she sat there, wondering and thinking, she fixed her eyes, quite by accident, on the door opposite to her; she looked at it for some time, in a dreamy sort of way, and watched the snow driving in through the chinks, till suddenly it struck her that these chinks, or openings, were very large indeed, and then just in a minute—she did not know a bit how the thought came, but it did come into her mind—"Now, if I could only creep through and get away!"

With a bound at her heart, she crept over to the door, and then she saw, that though the openings were large, not one was large enough to let her through, small though she was. But yet she felt she could not give it up. "If I were to push," she thought, "perhaps I could make them larger," and she put her two hands upon the side of the door, and pulled as hard as she could, but making no noise, for fear of being heard, as she knew her tormentors were in the next room, for she could hear their voices well, which only made her more anxious to get away, and yet more frightened at the same time. But pull as she might, she could not force the door more open, and though she tried to make no sound, yet the door did shake, and the noise reaching the next room, made Bill start up and come to the other door, saying dreadful words about her, and threatening to kill her if she tried to escape. Poor Nellie crouched down on the ground, half dead with fright, but Bill, when he had looked in and saw her safe, turned back and locked the door after him. She could breathe again then, but terrified though she was, she only felt more than ever she must run off, for stay with those terrible people any more she could not. She groped her hands over the door again—for it was quite dark now—but for some time she could find nothing to help her, and the wind whistling through nearly cut her in two, and the snow half blinded her, but she would not give in; she went on groping, till at last, to her great joy, she felt that one of the planks was loose, and if she could only be careful enough, she thought she could push it out, without making any noise. Steadily and quietly she pushed, but for a long time it would not stir, when at last—and oh, how her heart jumped when she felt it!—the piece of wood gave way, and the next moment she had crept through and was free! She did not wait

one instant, though where she was to go, she had no idea, but set off running with all her might. Forgetting the pain of her limbs, the snow, the wind, and the bitter cold, on, on she ran through the dark miserable streets, feeling that if only she could get away from them she would be safe. Once she thought she heard steps behind her, and her knees shook so that she could hardly stand; but she hid herself behind a wall, and after waiting some time, she saw it was no one, so peeping out and looking each way, to make sure all was safe, she set off running again faster than ever.

At last she got away from all the streets, and found herself on the outskirts of a great big common, with not a house anywhere to be seen. Where was she to go? Ah, that she could not tell, and though she was safe from her enemies, she felt very sad and desolate all the same, alone there in the dark night, with not a soul to speak to or take care of her. Besides, by this time she was in very great pain, and so weak that she did not know how she was to get along much further. However, she thought she must try, so she battled on through the snow for some time longer, till again she stopped, and this time sank down upon the ground, from her terrible weakness and pain. She longed to lie down there, and go to sleep and forget it all, and already her eyes were closing, when at that moment the clouds cleared away a little bit, and the moon, shining out, showed her a bright little light in the distance, which she thought must come from some house. "If I could only get there," she thought; "I must try;" and so the poor little woman toiled on again through the deep snow, slipping one moment, falling the next, and almost losing her senses from all she was suffering, but still she kept on till she reached the end of the common, and there, just in front of her, was a dear little house in the middle of a garden, with a neat paling round it and a wee gate to shut it all in. How she got through this gate she never knew, she could only remember that somehow or other she did, and then with a great thump came tumbling right down by the door of the cottage. We must leave her now for a few minutes, while we take a peep inside, and see what is going on there.

There is a snug little parlour on the ground floor, where two nice little old ladies, dressed in black, with white muslin aprons, and handkerchiefs of the same on their shoulders, and pretty soft caps, with grey ribbons, are sitting by a round table, covered with a snowy white cloth, drawn close up to a blazing fire, finishing their tea. You cannot think how comfortable they look there, with their buttered toast, fresh rolls, and hot tea, and a fat old cat at their feet, daintily lapping some warm milk. They are talking pleasantly together about different things, sometimes stopping to listen to the storm, and pity any creature who may be out on such a night. They have just said this for the third or fourth time, when suddenly

they hear a great thump outside the door, and they both leap off their chairs, as if they had been shot, and without a word, one seizes a fork, the other the poker, and armed in this way, they run to the door and call, "Martha! Martha!" as loud as they can shout. Martha, the servant, is down in her pretty bright kitchen, busy washing up her own tea-things, singing to herself, and sometimes throwing bits of food to another old cat, who sits gathered up lazily before the fire. She, too, has heard the noise, and runs up immediately into the little passage, where the old ladies are standing trembling with fright and hardly able to speak. At length one of them manages to ask her if she has heard it.

"Yes, ma'am," she answers.

"And—and—what are you going to do?"

"Go to the door, ma'am, and see what it is."

"Not for anything," they both cry out; "it's most likely a whole gang of—of—robbers. Oh, dear! oh, dear! what will become of us?"

"Ah, don't be so frightened," said Martha; "it's most likely some poor dog that's lost its way in the snow. Wait, I'll look out here through the window and see;" and so she gently unclosed a bit of the shutter, while the two old ladies crouched together in a corner, and shook with terror. "I see nothing, I declare," said she, "I must really go to the door," and before they could say "yes" or "no," she had opened it, and there lay poor little Nellie right before her feet. "Bless me! if it aint a poor little girl lying in the snow," she exclaimed, and at these words the old ladies rushed to the door too, dropping their fork and poker on the way, and nearly crying at the sorrowful sight before them. And, indeed, it was sorrowful, for there was poor Nellie lying in Martha's arms, like one dead, her dark hair blown about, her eyes shut, her face all colours, and her limbs without any power in them.

"Bring her in, bring her in," said the kind old ladies, and Martha lifted her up, while the ladies shut and barred the door, and carrying her down to the warm bright kitchen, laid her on her lap before the fire, while one old lady went for a blanket and the other put some milk to heat for her.

For a long time nothing would bring her to; but at last the heavy eyes opened with such a frightened, sad look, and the poor little lips whispered, "Don't, oh! don't send me to him."

"No, no, my poor child," said one of the old ladies, "you'll be sent nowhere, but kept here safe with us." This seemed to quiet her, for she closed her eyes again and gave a little sigh of relief.

Martha laid her down there in a little straw chair by the fire, while the old ladies fed her with sips of hot milk, and a little bread soaked in it, and went to get a warm bath ready. You may think how shocked

and sorry they were, when they saw how her poor neck and shoulders and arms were covered with bruises, and how she trembled when they touched her; but Martha bathed them so gently that by degrees the pain went off, and when she had wrapped her up in one of her bedgowns, and laid her down in her own bed, you could see by the way the child lay, and her quieter breathing, that she was getting more comfortable, and would soon fall into a nice sleep. And so she did, but just before she dropped off, she opened her eyes and said, "God did help me," and then, with a smile on her face, fell asleep.

And so we may leave her, quite sure that the good ladies who had taken her in would never let her go away into the cold hard world by herself again, but would watch over her and take care of her for ever after.

NINA COLE.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

160. Once only during our Lord's public ministry do we read of the Apostle Thomas asking him a question. Give it.

161. There are certain expressions made use of in the first chapter of St. John's Gospel, which prove that "the Word" was a personality. Quote them.

162. When our Lord exhorted the people as to their duty of not distrusting God, what examples of God's goodness does he adduce?

163. According to St. John, who pronounced the decisive words which led to the death of Jesus?

164. Though the Israelites drove out the Canaanites, the inhabitants of two small kingdoms were never expelled. Give their names.

165. Where in the Old Testament do the words occur, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die?"

166. Who said, "Are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord your God?"

167. What prophet mentions the valley of Jehoshaphat?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 383.

146. Zech. ix. 9.

147. He calls them "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" (Matt. v. 13, 14).

148. During the temptation (Matt. iv. 6); the devil misquoted (Ps. xci. 11).

149. Col. i. 15—17.

150. The visit of the Magi; the flight into Egypt; the murder of the innocents.

151. The natural recovery of Epaphroditus from "a sickness nigh unto death," and leaving Trophimus "sick at Miletum," prove that the power of performing cures did not depend upon the apostles' own will.

BIBLE NOTES.

THE MAN WITH THE WITHERED HAND (Matt. xii. 9-14; Mark iii. 1-6; Luke vi. 6-11).

HE went into their synagogue." Our Lord had just defended his disciples from an accusation brought against them by the Pharisees of "doing that which was not lawful to do on the Sabbath-day;" and when he had silenced his malignant enemies, who seem to follow him wherever he goes, on a Sabbath-day he repairs to their synagogue, where his opposers seem already to have been waiting for him.

"A man which had a withered hand." In the synagogue was a man whose hand—St. Luke says it was the right hand—was withered, or stiffened, and shrunken together. The disease was occasioned by a cessation of the work of nutrition in the limb. Blood no longer flowed; the pulse no longer beat; the nerves and sinews were blasted and useless, and the hand hung dead by his side. The skill of man was of no avail in his case. Tradition hands it down that this sufferer was a stonemason, who prayed Jesus to heal him in order that he might no longer have need to beg. We have no evidence to show that he was brought here to entrap the Saviour; rather may we suppose that he came as a learner, to derive comfort and instruction from the religious services. The opposers of Christ seem to have drawn his attention to this man, and wishing to bring about an offence, they put to him the question—

"Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-days?" To this they expected a direct answer, that on it they might bring him before a council, through a malignant envy. He disappointed their hopes, and, as was often his custom, he replied by asking them another question—

"What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep?" This is a decisive answer. Their own consciences told them that it was a work of mercy to rescue a dumb animal from peril even on the Sabbath-day—that such a work must be approved of; how much more to give health to a man, and so enable him to work as heretofore! You rescue one sheep from a pit into which it has fallen, and shall not I, the true Shepherd, rescue one of the sheep of my fold—a man—who is far better than a sheep? The Jews had not as yet so entirely lost all proper feeling as not to allow a beast which had fallen into a pit on the Sabbath-day to be pulled out; otherwise Jesus could not have appealed to this observance. In after times the rules respecting this matter were more stringent, and it was commanded that if a beast had fallen into a pit on the Sabbath-day, necessary food might be thrown to it, or even

straw for it to lie on, whereby it might perhaps be enabled to climb out.

After Jesus had answered his questioners, he in turn took them to task, as we learn from St. Mark and St. Luke. He knew their thoughts, and looked on them with anger and grief. He first commanded the man to rise up, and stand forth in the midst. The man did not allow himself to be withheld from obeying the command by the possible displeasure of those who thought themselves the leaders of the people. The bold step is taken without hesitation. He must have felt within himself that it was not to mock him that he was told to stand forth, and so his rising showed his faith in Christ. While he stands thus, with the eyes of all fastened on him, Jesus told his adversaries that he wanted to ask them one question. It was this:—

"Is it lawful on the Sabbath-days to do good, or evil? to save life, or to destroy it?" This was apparently an exceedingly easy question, but it contained for them a cutting rebuke, for they were even now engaged in doing evil—planning his destruction, whilst he sought to do good. What Divine gentleness have we here! He patiently waits for an answer. He contrasts his benevolence with their murderous designs. They felt themselves reproved, and were silent. They are unable to answer the question. Thus the principle was decided that it certainly was lawful to do well on the Sabbath-days. Upon this he proceeded to act, saying to him who was now to experience a blessing,

"Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, as the other." The man obeyed the word, and he found to his comfort that it was a word of power. His dead hand is restored to life.

"The Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him." Such is the effect of this act of mercy. His adversaries are maddened with rage. The design to destroy him originates with the Pharisees, who, in their fury, snatch at any means whereby they may accomplish their end. Unable to do it alone, they league themselves with the Herodians, who were probably offended with him because he had withdrawn himself out of Herod's way. It is so still in the world: the cause of truth is opposed by enemies who conspire together to vanquish it. As in the days wherein the Son of man went about doing good, the malice of scribes and Pharisees could not deprive the poor of the blessings He had to bestow, so we may be sure that neither the world, the flesh, nor the devil can now cause His arm to be shortened, or His mercy to cease.